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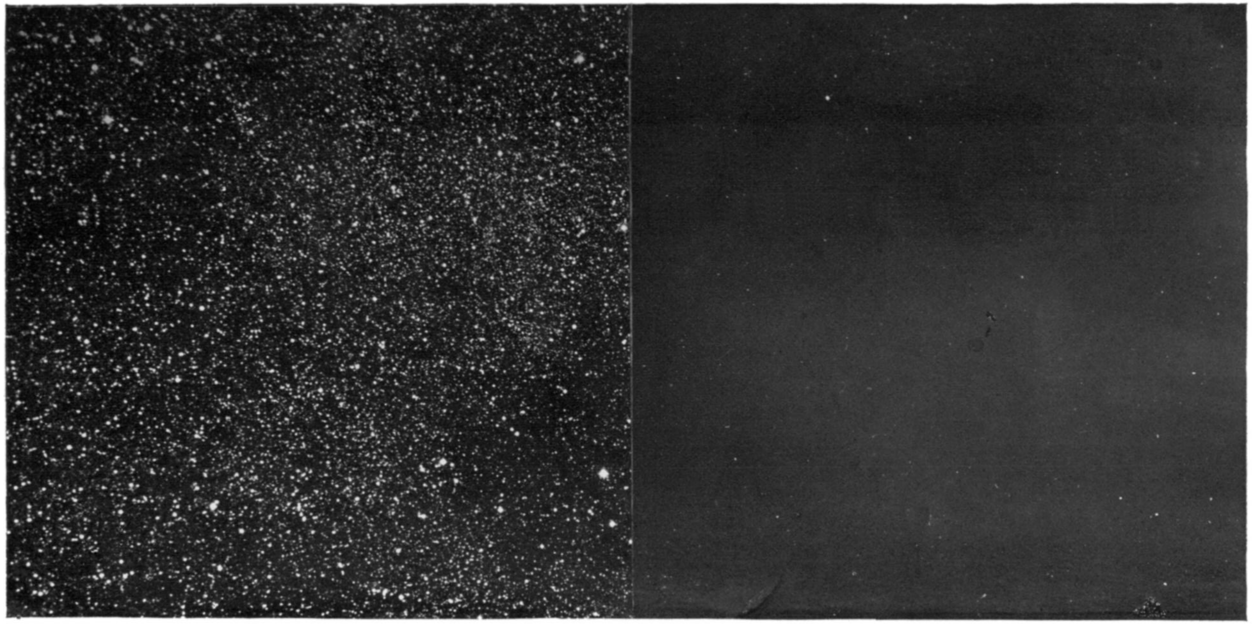

PLATE VIII. A Contrast in Stellar Distribution.

NOTES FROM PACIFIC COAST OBSERVATORIES

A CONTRAST IN STELLAR DISTRIBUTION

A remarkable contrast in stellar distribution is shown in Plate VIII, facing this page.

Each half of the cut is half a degree on a side, so that the area of each part is 0.25 of a square degree. The area subtended by the disk of the full Moon, at its mean distance, is 0.21 of a square degree. Both plates were taken with the Crossley Reflector; the exposures were 1^h50^m in each case. The photographic enlargements from which the cuts were engraved were made by Mr. Carl Bergmann.

The upper portion of the plate shows a region of the Milky Way at 18^h4^m right ascension and 27°30′ south declination. This is one of the densest regions of the Milky Way thus far photographed with the Crossley Reflector. Counts on a number of small areas scattered over the plate indicate that there are at least 76,000 stars in the area covered by the cut. The very faintest stars in places form an almost continuous background which is lost in the reproduction.

The lower portion of the plate shows a starless region to the southeast of *θ Ophiuchi*, at 17^h24^m right ascension, and 25°30′ south declination. In this area of one-quarter of a square degree there are only 124 stars.

The two regions are a little more than nine degrees apart. It is very probable that the stellar desert shown in the lower cut is due, at least in part, to the presence of occulting matter.

HEBER D. CURTIS.

THE VARIATION IN SUN-SPOT ACTIVITY DURING THE PRESENT CYCLE

The sun-spot activity during the present cycle has been very typical in character, the variation represented in the lower curve of the figure showing very well the remarkable similarity to the light variation of Cepheid variables. In this curve the ordinates are the number of spot groups observed during three months, the open circles showing the number for the individual quarters and the black dots the average number observed quarterly during a whole year. A group has been counted as new when it appeared